Foreign Exchange given to M.Ps. for study Tours

251. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special amount in Foregin Exchange is given to Members of Parliament for their study tours;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof including the amount, duration and since when it has been in vogue;

(c) whether Government propose to increase this amount due to recent devaluation; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, what are reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Member of Parliament is entitled to a foreign exchange quota of Rs. 27,000/- per term for study tours abroad. The facility of study tour quota is in vogue since 1963.

(c) and (d) In view of the severe foreign exchange crunch at present, it is not possible to increase the level of study tour quota in the immediate future.

Smuggling of vintage cars

252. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of selling and smuggling of vintage cars from India recently; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what action has been taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Three vintage cars, sold by the erstwhile princely family of Nabha to another Indian National were subsequently exported to the United Kingdom from Inland Container Depot Adalaj in the month of March, 1991 on the basis of allegedly forged documents and by misdeclaring the cars as 'Indian Handicrafted Assembly Unit (LMV)'. After investigation, an offence case has been registered under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 against the concerned persons/firm. The matter is also being investigated by Enforcement Directorate for possible violation of Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973.

Four persons including one foreign national, who were involved in the case, have been detained under the provisions of Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974.

Shortage of drugs for cure of Kala Aazar

253. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1224 given in the Rajya Sabha on 30th July, 1991 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is shortage of pentamidine drug;

(b) whether it is also a fact that fake drugs have surfaced in the market for Kala Azar; and

(c) what is the cost of pentamidine required for a single Kala Azar patient?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI D. K. THARADEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) Pentamidine is not manufactured indigenously and is imported. Adequate quantities of this drug are supplied to the affected States including Bihar for treatment of Kala Azar cases not responsive to Sodium Stibogluconate, the first line drug.

(b) This Ministry has not come across any such report.

(c) The cost of Pentamidine (full course of treatment) required for a single Kala Azar patient varies between Rs. 2400 and Rs. 3600 at prevailing prices and depends on the degree of response to the number of doses to a patient.